

cannot help admiring and respecting virtue in others.¹ In Letter CLII, he writes, "By merit, I mean the moral virtues, knowledge, and manners; as to the moral virtues, I say nothing to you, they speak best for themselves,--I will, therefore, only assure you, that without them you will be most unhappy;² and in Letter CCXII, "For God's sake be scrupulously jealous of the purity of your moral character; keep it immaculate, unblemished, unsullied, and it will be unsuspected. Without this purity, you can have no dignity of character and without dignity of character it is impossible to rise in the world. You must be respectable, if you will be respected."³

Chesterfield, in the majority of instances, voices the thoughts, ambitions, hopes, and ideals of the Elizabethans in his admonitions, suggestions, and observations. He is very intimate in his subject matter and treatment; so are they. Moral virtues, personal habits in thinking, speaking, conduct in solitude and in society, personal relationships with various types of men and women; personal appearance are each given due attention by these guides to the would-be ideal gentleman. "The Prince is to have a care in all his actions to behave himself so as may give him the reputation of being excellent as well as great....much esteemed when he shows himself a sincere friend or a generous enemy."⁴ "But, alas! shall justice halt, or shall she wink in one's cause that had lynx's eyes in another's, or rather shall all private respects give place to that holy name? Be it so, be it so; let my gray hairs be laid

1. Chesterfield's Letters to His Son, p 62, Letter LXVIII.

2. op. cit., p 151, Letter CLII.

3. op. cit., p 295, Letter CCXII.

4. The Prince, p 139